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Can You Escape? The Design and Implementation of an Escape Room as an Innovative Teaching Strategy

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Purpose

An Escape Room was developed for the Medical Surgical Internship Workshop in order to provide an interactive teaching strategy that fosters team building, critical thinking, and friendly competition.

Background

The Escape Room originated in Japan in 2007. In 2012 the idea popularized in the United States. An Escape Room is an interactive game in which teams work together by solving riddles, puzzles, and find clues in order to escape a simulated scenario. Examples of Escape Room scenarios are escaping from a prison, pirate ship or finding a cure to a disease. Creating an Escape Room for educational purposes has recently gained popularity. Escape Rooms have been incorporated into nursing, pharmacy, medical students and surgery residents' training programs. The benefits of incorporating game based learning as a teaching strategy are evident. Nurses are able to meet the learning objectives in a safe environment that is engaging, interactive, and fun!

Development

The Escape Room was developed in a 4 step process.

- **Step 1** is identifying the educational need and objectives. The Escape Room theme can be an overview for Medical Surgical Nurses or could be a specific procedure or protocol such as Sepsis or Code Blue. A thorough review of literature on Escape Rooms was completed.
- **Step 2** involves buy in from stakeholders and approval with designated monies available for the project. During this step a local Escape Room was attended.
- **Step 3** involves the development of the puzzles, riddles, and clues needed to flow from one clue to the next and meet objectives. A total of 12 different puzzles were developed in order to move the nurses through the Escape Room.

Educational objectives included in the Escape Room were catheter associated urinary tract infection, pressure injuries, central lines, tracheostomies, patient falls, cardiac rhythms, and chest tubes. The time frame needed to develop the room was two to three months.

- **Step 4** is the last step and involves testing of the Escape Room. The Department of Education Professional Development team, Patient Care Specialist (unit educators), and staff nurses all tested the Escape Room with valuable information gained and necessary adjustments made. Ensuring that learners are pre briefed with the scenario and rules is a crucial step that was developed in the testing phase.

Results

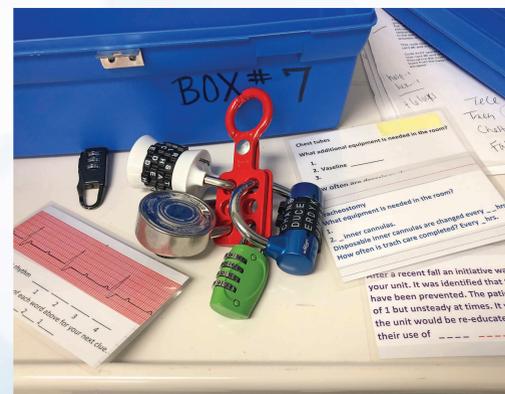
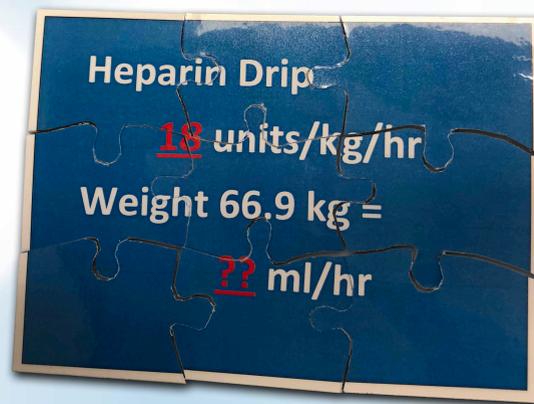
The Escape Room was found to be a creative and innovative way to engage nurses and positively influence their learning experience. There was a 20% improvement in the Medical Surgical pre and post test scores. Nurse comments from workshop evaluations included:

“Loved the Escape Room!”

“It was fun and kept all of us engaged and it made us use critical thinking in order to get through the activity.”

“The Escape Room was so much fun! Definitely add this to all your workshops!”

“The Escape Room made us use our own skills, I really enjoyed this!”



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